



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Jewel Cave National  
Monument

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## Jewel Cave National Monument News Release

Release Date: 1/11/2012

For Immediate Release

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### **Jewel Cave Offers Free Cave Tours on Holiday Weekend**

JEWEL CAVE NATIONAL MONUMENT, S.D. – In honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, all National Park Service areas will waive entrance fees. Jewel Cave National Monument will offer free cave tours to all visitors to celebrate this special weekend, January 14 – 16, 2012.

“From Independence Hall to our newest national park, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, our national parks tell the story of America, from the beauty of our land to our struggle for freedom and justice,” states Ken Salazar, Secretary of the Interior. Jewel Cave National Monument is one of many public land agencies within the Black Hills. It is home to the second longest cave in the world, and its significance embellishes the idea of exploration and discovery.

Jewel Cave visitors may choose the Scenic Tour or the Discovery Tour. Scenic Tours are offered at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. and provide an opportunity to view a variety of beautiful, colorful, and rare cave formations for which Jewel Cave is famous. This one-half mile tour is moderately strenuous, following a paved, lighted trail with over 700 stair steps and lasting approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes. The Discovery Tour will be conducted at 9:05 a.m., 12:45 p.m., and 3:45 p.m., and is a 20-minute introduction to the cultural and natural heritage of Jewel Cave. This wheelchair and stroller accessible program is conducted in one large room of the cave.

Due to the off-season, tickets are limited and only available on a first-come, first-serve basis on site. The cave temperature is approximately 49 °F. A light coat or sweater and sturdy walking shoes are recommended. All tours begin at the Visitor Center.

For more information, please contact Jewel Cave National Monument at 605-673-8300 or online at [www.nps.gov/jeca](http://www.nps.gov/jeca).

*About the National Park Service. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 395 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).*